

# SNEAK TEACHING

Grant Pylkas

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The characters in this fictional work are the product of my imagination and any likeness to any real individual is coincidence.

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# Dedication

This book is dedicated to Elizabeth Ostrowski, my niece, who at the age of sixteen ended her addiction to drugs and joined The Ancestors. It is in her memory that I wrote this book.

This book is also dedicated to many young relatives who walked into a recovery center and started a new life.

I need to make mention of a young man who's daily recovery is of special importance. Alex Hennessey was almost lost to all of us who understand this disease called addiction. We thought that he was about to join The Ancestors. He didn't; he walked through those scary doors of recovery and is the promise of AA come true, alive, and recovering today.

This book is for all who take the scary walk through that door and into their first AA meeting. They all are the proof that the promises of AA come true, one day at a time.



# Acknowledgements

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# Chapter 1

## Jeffery Canna

I was a “Hood,” destined for jail and then Hell. I was told, in no uncertain terms, that Hell was waiting and that jail would be no better. Jail was just the jumping off place for Hell, and I was a sure bet for both. An aging, raging busybody took up that bet in the winter of 1960.

My name is “P” — a nickname that the family gave me. It sticks to this day. I’m the guy that this fanatic was making predictions about and condemning to Hell. It is me, “P”.

In 1959, my family moved from the city of St. Paul, Minnesota, and into South St. Paul, a suburb where my father worked. I was transplanted from a small neighborhood school in St. Paul, to an over-crowded, suburban school with large classes and teachers that were in their fifties and sixties. Like many other baby-boomers, I was born three years after World War II and just before the Korean War. I was nine year old and young for the fourth grade. I was so skinny that my ribs showed through my chest. I wasn’t tall, but I wasn’t short, either. My hair was in a very short, almost shaved cut called a “Heinie” in those days.

I was already behind in my studies when I moved to my new school, having been sick at home with swollen tonsils during most of the first half of the school

year. Frankly, I did not want to leave my fourth-grade friends or my teacher at Como Elementary School. I was happy at that school. I had been the happiest I was to be for some time in the near future.

I also had to move into a smaller bedroom with my older, seventh-grade brother. The room was far too small for two boys of any age. We had shared a large attic bedroom in the old house, and we'd had lots of room. It didn't matter that I liked my brother and had real respect for him. I just didn't want to live in the same room with him. We fought a lot in the new place.

We moved, celebrated Christmas and the New Year holidays, and then off to school I went.

It was as cold as the Arctic on the first day I went to South Saint Paul's Lincoln Elementary School. It was a sunny and crisp twenty-seven degrees below zero on that morning, a temperature that can freeze human skin in about a minute. Fortunately, our car was parked in a garage attached to our new house, unlike the garage at our previous house on Grotto Street in St. Paul. Starting our car in our old place was always a gamble. Would it start, or would it be frozen? At that time, having a warm garage provided an elevated social status.

The day she delivered me to Lincoln School, Mom told me what was on her mind. She gave a little speech, "We have moved up. The family has experienced a social transformation from poor inner city kids to the next generation of professional adults. You will all become the adults I expect you to become. You are special, with talents that belong only to you. You will discover those talents and become someone that will make me and your dad proud."

Mom believed that her children would make it. She believed that we, all five of us, would go to college

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